Montevideo, June 1, 2021

Dear Watchers,

The Covid-19 pandemic is affecting the whole world, but in differentiated ways, highlighting structural inequalities within and between countries.

The confluence of a health emergency and economic crisis has shown the disastrous consequences of undermining democratic governance and weakening public services. The crisis has elicited much talk of solidarity. But the brutal competition for vaccines shows that solidarity is used merely as a rhetorical phrase. The interests of a privileged elite continue to dominate. The prospects for recovery are diverging dangerously within and across countries and regions. The slogan "Leave no one behind" of the 2030 Agenda remains a mere mockery.

Social Watch will bring these observations to the attention of the United Nations through the Spotlight report 2021 and your contributions from national experiences will provide the substance.

This year the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) will again be virtual and its main theme is "Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic". The HLPF in 2021 will discuss in depth Sustainable Development Goals 1 on no poverty, 2 on zero hunger, 3 on good health and well-being, 8 on decent work and economic growth, 10 on reduced inequalities, 12 on responsible consumption and production, 13 on climate action, 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions, and 17 on partnerships. Additionally, the following countries will present their Voluntary National Reports: Afghanistan, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bhutan, Bolivia, Cabo Verde, Chad, China, Colombia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Germany, Guatemala, Indonesia, Iraq, Japan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Myanmar, Namibia, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Paraguay, Qatar, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, Tunisia, Uruguay, Zimbabwe.

Social Watch is inviting civil society groups to contribute in two different ways:

a) a national alternative report, looking at how your government is implementing its 2030 Agenda commitments. This can be a reaction to the official report of any of the countries reporting this year, or to the official reports of previous years, many of which were not known to civil society with enough time to present their own alternative reports during the same Forum in which the official report was presented. Those reports will be compiled and published in the websites of Social Watch and of the Spotlight report and their conclusions summarized in the global Spotlight report.

b) a brief description or examples of popular demands and mobilizations, in any of their multiple formats, the policies that motivate them and the alternatives proposed. These contributions will be published in the website and might also be used as boxes in the global report, with due accreditation to their authors.

Format of reports
Each contributor can choose its own format and length for its national report, but in order to foster the sharing of experiences and allow for some comparisons, an "executive summary" of around 2500 words would be very helpful. This summary will be widely circulated. The whole report in its original language will also be made available in the Social Watch website.

Deadlines

by 25 June
Deadline for short insights on specific policies/campaigns (a few paragraphs outlining the issue to be highlighted)

by 6 July
Final versions of national reports or their executive summaries. Reports received after that date will still be included in the website but will most likely not be published before the HLPF ends.

At the Social Watch secretariat we are looking forward to hearing from you about your plans for 2021 and we hope to be of help in your advocacy and campaigning.

In solidarity,
Roberto Bissio,
Social Watch International Secretariat

Do not hesitate to write to us with any questions or comments: rbissio@item.org.uy or anaclau@item.org.uy